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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 8239th meeting of the Security Council, held on 19 April 2018, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Liberia", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"As the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) completed its mandate on 30 March 2018, the Security Council commends the remarkable achievements and notable progress made by the people and Government of Liberia to consolidate lasting peace and stability since 2003 and their continued commitment to respect and develop democratic processes and institutions. The Security Council underlines significant improvements in social cohesion, the overall security situation in Liberia, and progress on respect for human rights, all of which play crucial roles in consolidating peace and stability.

"In this regard, the Security Council commends Liberia's government for its preparation and execution of the 2017 legislative and presidential elections and peaceful resolution of disputes, which have helped to build the resilience of Liberia's democratic institutions. The Security Council expresses appreciation to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union and all international, regional and domestic election observation missions for their contributions to the transparency of the electoral process and timely assessments. The Council commends UNMIL's multifaceted assistance provided to the 2017 elections process.

"The Security Council expresses its appreciation for the important contribution of UNMIL, and its civilian and uniformed personnel, particularly those who gave their lives while serving to promote peace, stability and development throughout UNMIL's more than fourteen-year operation in Liberia. The Security Council also takes this opportunity to express its appreciation for the efforts of the Secretary-General, his Special Representative, Mr. Farid Zarif, and all the preceding Special Representatives for Liberia. The Security Council commends the steadfastness of UNMIL personnel in the execution of their duties during especially challenging periods, including the 2014 outbreak of the Ebola virus. The Security Council commends the contribution of troop- and police-contributing countries and donors in support of UNMIL's mandates.

"The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to undertake within a year, and within existing resources, a study of the role of UNMIL in the resolution of conflicts and challenges in Liberia through the contributions of

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good offices, political mediation, the sanctions regime as well as other relevant factors as appropriate, that allowed for the successful completion of UNMIL's mandate and transition to the United Nations Country Team (UNCT). The Security Council looks forward to the results of this study, including further lessons learned and recommendations on the best practices of United Nations peacekeeping missions in transition, and expresses its intention to consider options for taking them into account in the context of its ongoing work to enhance the overall effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping.

"The Security Council welcomes the continued implementation of the Liberia Peacebuilding Plan, entitled 'Sustaining Peace and Securing Development' (S/2017/282), submitted by the Secretary-General to the Council pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2333 (2016) after development through close consultation among the United Nations, the Government of Liberia, and partners. The Security Council notes actions undertaken during Phase I of the plan and the beginning of Phase II in support of the Government of Liberia's commitment to develop durable national capacities critical to sustain peace, and, in this regard, encourages all stakeholders to enhance efforts to fulfil their commitments and provide their support for successful implementation. The Security Council emphasizes the need for expanded efforts by the Liberian authorities to address the root causes of conflict, reinvigorate reconciliation processes, promote land reform, advance constitutional and institutional reforms, especially in the justice and security sectors, promote women's and youths' active participation in peacebuilding, extend state authority and social services throughout the country, continue to improve respect for human rights, and build trust between Liberian citizens and the government institutions.

"The Security Council welcomes the government's plans to engage citizens as it finalizes a national development agenda, and further welcomes the positive alignment between the government's pro-poor vision with the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030, which would address poverty in Liberia and improve the economic status of persons in vulnerable situations, most notably women and youth.

"The Security Council requests the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) to make available its good offices, as necessary, to the Government of Liberia and the United Nations Resident Coordinator.

"The Security Council recalls its high-level review of resolution 1325 (2000) and its commitments through resolution 2242 (2015), which reaffirms the important role of women in peacebuilding, reiterates the substantial link between women's meaningful involvement in efforts to prevent, resolve and rebuild from conflict and those efforts' effectiveness and long-term sustainability, and stresses, in this regard, the importance of women's empowerment and equal participation in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security in Liberia.

"The Security Council expresses its continued concern that women and girls in Liberia continue to face a high incidence of sexual and gender-based violence, and reiterates its call on the Government of Liberia to address the urgent and imperative need to combat impunity and hold accountable all perpetrators responsible for such crimes, to reinforce its commitment in this regard, including through the implementation of its national action plan on sexual and gender-based violence and improving women and girls' access to justice.

"The Security Council underscores that sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations peacekeepers is unacceptable and affirms its support for the

United Nations zero tolerance policy on all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). The Security Council welcomes steps taken by UNMIL to address SEA and encourages the UNCT to strengthen the effectiveness of existing safeguards, to ensure that beneficiaries are always put first and to facilitate a system-wide process of improving standards and restoring trust. It further calls upon the UNCT to ensure, as described in S/2018/344, that pending allegations as of 30 June 2018 are transferred to the regional conduct and discipline team (CDT) based in MINUSMA, and new allegations routed through the Resident Coordinator's office before transfer to MINUSMA CDT and the Department of Field Support, for appropriate review and follow-up actions.

"The Security Council stresses that the United Nations will continue to be an important partner of Liberia after the closing of UNMIL. The Security Council recognises the March 23 communique of the Liberia Moment conference and the United Nations' continuing commitment to Liberia by maintaining a robust UNCT comprised of sixteen agencies, funds, and programmes.

"The Security Council underscores the importance of the continued support of bilateral and multilateral partners to Liberia as it embarks on the next stage of its development, beyond UNMIL, and encourages the UN, African Union, ECOWAS and the Mano River Union, to continue to play a significant role in support of building and sustaining peace in Liberia. The Security Council recognizes the important role of the UN Peacebuilding Commission in Liberia and encourages its continued active engagement."